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AIR UNIVERSITY
AIR WAR COLLEGE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE
ALABAMA

1 Aug 51
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SUBJECT: Analysis of Barcus and Stearns Reports

THRU: Commanding General
Air University
Maxwell AF Base, Alabama

TO: Director of Requirements
U. S. Air Force
Washington 25, D. C.

1. In compliance with your directive, an analysis has been conducted of the Barcus report. From that analysis the following general conclusions have been reached:

a. There is a need for the dissemination to the commanders of the other two services and within these services of established inter-service responsibilities, functions, and relationships, and for obtaining the acceptance of these responsibilities, functions, and relationships in fact and in spirit by both the Army and the Navy.

b. There is a need for the formulation of current Air Force doctrine and for the dissemination of this doctrine within the Air Force as well as the other services.

c. The Air Force has played a major if not decisive role in the war against the communist forces in Korea, but there are numerous Air Force deficiencies many of which stemmed from failure to apply lessons learned in World War II that are in need of examination and correction.

Details of this analysis are provided in the staff study "Analysis of the Barcus Report," hereto attached.

2. After a review of the Stearns report it appears appropriate to submit the following information:

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USAA&MS-AG Control
NA 75-17-62

AC USAA&MS TS Log 16-62

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Ltr to Dir of Requirements, Hq, USAF, subj: "Analysis of Barcus and Stearns Reports"

a. The Stearns report was submitted as a result of a study made at the request of the Secretary of the Air Force to Dr. Robert L. Stearns, president of the University of Colorado. ~~Major~~ General Thomas W. White acted as his military adviser and further assistance was given by a staff of selected assistants. The study covered the period ending 1 November 1950 but the author explained that subsequent periods were discussed, and that some of the conclusions reached were based on source material provided by the Barcus group, material which covered the period ending 31 December 1950.

b. Dr. Stearns conceived his mission of evaluating USAF effort in Korea as being an extremely broad one. He made no reference to his having been given a directive to inquire into inter-service differences that had been accentuated by the war, or criticisms that had been made of the use of the air forces in that theater. However, the attention that has been devoted to these controversies suggest a definite consciousness of their existence if not a concerted effort on the author's part to examine those particular phases of air power employment with which the differences and criticisms were associated. The view was also taken that the mission, if successful, required that the examination be completed without delay.

c. The subjective nature of the Stearns report does not permit an evaluation of the validity of the conclusions submitted. Opinions and observations were offered without the inclusion of substantiating intelligence from which these conclusions were derived. The report text did not disclose the source of this intelligence or the method by which it was obtained and examined. Neither was the breadth of the cross section of data examined indicated.

d. The Barcus and the Stearns reports are in general agreement as to the factors that have hindered the effectiveness of the USAF in Korea. They agree that the Air Force has played a major if not decisive role in the war against the communist forces in that theater. Further, that this result was achieved despite the absence of a joint theater staff with proper air component representation, and despite the existence of the numerous problems that hampered effective employment of the Air Forces.

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Ltr to Dir of Requirements, HQ, USAF, subj: "Analysis of Marcus and Stearns Reports"

e. The Stearns study appears to have been pursued in three general directions:

- (1) An examination of the various controversies that had originated in Korea or had been emphasized by the war. Among these controversies were:
 - (a) Command of tactical close support aviation in a theater of operations.
 - (b) Effectiveness of Marine air support versus Air Force close air support.
 - (c) Multiple purpose aircraft versus aircraft designed for close air attack.
 - (d) Jet aircraft versus conventional reciprocating engine aircraft.
- (2) An attempt to determine whether or not the USAF had employed its forces effectively in Korea.
 - (a) Inquiry in this direction may suggest that the effectiveness of the USAF in Korea had been questioned, or it may derive from a desire to make the employment of our air capability more effective. However, the former seems to have been the motive for the Stearns study. The result of his inquiry is the implicit conclusion that the USAF in Korea was effective and made a major if not decisive contribution to the ground battle, but that it was less effective than it would have been had the established principles of air power employment in a theater of operations been followed more closely.
- (3) An evaluation of the doctrine of air power employment as enunciated in WD FM 31-35.

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Ltr to Dir of Requirements, Hq, USAF, subj: "Analysis of Marcus and Stearns Reports"

- (a) The doctrine contained in FM 31-35 was found to be sound in its major principle, but the statement of tactical air tasks and the priority of these tasks was criticized by implying standardization and as restricting the flexibility of the Air Force.

f. The following conclusions were stated or appear to have been arrived at from inquiry into areas not explored by the Marcus group:

- (1) The proportionate amount of close support provided by the Air Force in the Korean war was extraordinarily heavy when compared to World War II experience.
- (2) Evaluation studies should be a joint undertaking at Department of Defense level.
- (3) Air Force personnel did not easily adapt themselves to living and operating under field conditions. There is a need for more realistic field training.
- (4) A program of affirmative education is needed to indoctrinate all Air Force personnel in the purpose and aims of the war in Korea.
- (5) Air Force commanders were justifiably concerned about their dependence on the Army for vital services and supplies. The allocation by JCS or departmental agreement between the services for procurement and distribution of certain common supplies appear to need a restudy. Air Force requirements for supplies furnished by the Army were generally met. However, there were times when the margin was dangerously small. The order of loading ships with both Army and Air Force items created a problem.
- (6) The Korean war points up a need for the modification of our adherence to the Geneva treaty to the extent of allowing us to arm all medical personnel.

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Ltr to Dir of Requirements, Hq, USAF, subj: "Analysis of Barcus and Stearns Reports"

3. The opinions and observations stated in the Stearns report give added emphasis to the recommendations that are made in the staff study "Analysis of the Barcus Report" that is attached.

FOR THE COMMANDANT:

1 Incl
Staff Study, subj:
"Analysis of the
Barcus Report" (trip)

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